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Modernizing U.S. Counterinsurgency Practice: Rethinking Risk and Developing a National Strategy

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While the updating of U.S. Army counterinsurgency (COIN) doctrine is long overdue, its imminent arrival is cause for celebration. The reality, however, is that the military doctrine won't fully address two challenges that remain critical for its ultimate success. One—altering approaches to risk–confronts an inhospitable politico-military culture and institutional history. The other key issue—the need for all components of the U.S. Government (USG) to develop shared assumptions and expectations in COIN—is above the pay grade of military doctrine. If the United States expects to be engaged in COIN in the future—and some would argue that the Long War is essentially countering a global insurgency—it had best address these issues rather than assume that forthcoming military doctrine resolves them.

I. Military Doctrine Review

In February 2006, an odd fraternity of experts diligently combed through a revision of Field Manual-Interim 3-07.22, *Counterinsurgency Operations*. It was an unusual crowd of veterans of Vietnam and El Salvador, representatives of human rights nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and international organizations, academic experts, civilian agency representatives, journalists, and active duty U.S. and foreign military. At the behest of Lieutenant General David Petraeus, Commanding General of the U.S. Army Combined Arms Center, the assembly sought to make decades-old Army and Marine Corps doctrine freshly applicable to the contemporary insurgencies. The doctrine needed obvious updating to account for modern technologies, military capabilities, and operational concepts; to create a new breed of forces equipped to engage a global terrorist network; and to better address modern political and normative realities.

Perhaps more critically, the doctrinal update required reckoning with the enduring truths and dilemmas facing any counterinsurgency. These reflect lessons from prior British, French, and other foreign-power operations as well as from America's war in Vietnam. Ironically, perhaps, it is these persistent truths about COIN that pose the greater challenge for U.S. forces. Two points in particular stand out. The first is the counterintuitive need to accept greater physical risks to personnel in order to achieve political and military objectives. This is a particular challenge for the American military, which, as Russell Weigley showed, has spent decades developing a style of warfare that institutionally minimized those risks. The second point is the need for an integrated government strategy in an era when the military is often both the first tool and last resort of U.S. policy and many intra-government efforts fall short of the mark.

Breaking the conventional paradigm. For decades, the U.S. Army in particular had discounted the need to prepare for counterinsurgency—a messy, hydra-headed conflict that can, by its very nature, only be won incrementally. One reason for ignoring the challenge was that, as Vietnam so painfully underscored, COIN is hard to do well. A related but deeper factor is that effective counterinsurgency efforts confront core American predilections. American culture and U.S. military doctrine prefer a technological solution and the overwhelmingly decisive blow. Americans have a penchant for black-and-white clarity and have historically shown little patience for complexity and extended commitment. We Americans also like to win on our own terms. And, with the major exception of Vietnam, the United States has been remarkably successful in modern warfare.

Accordingly, much of the U.S. military's post-Vietnam efforts focused on neat, linear, and decisive concepts of warfare. Taking refuge in the Powell Doctrine, the armed forces prepared to fight and win conventional conflicts. Large massed formations, heavier weapons employed at increasing distances, and overwhelming force at the strategic and tactical level were the hallmarks of U.S. planning. Unconventional war, if it reared its head, was relegated to the subculture of U.S. special operations. But wishing away messy, multidimensional, and lengthy conflicts has not been an adequate solution.

Having so diligently shaped their units and strategies for the conventional fight, our forces were ill-prepared for operations that didn't fit that paradigm. After Operation Desert Storm, however, that's what U.S. ground forces have faced. During the 1990's, the Army and Marine Corps dutifully labored through small-scale stability operations from Haiti to Kosovo. Since 9/11—except, perhaps, for the first month of the Iraq invasion—it has all been messy, multidimensional counterinsurgency for American forces in Afghanistan, Iraq, and beyond.

Institutional and cultural challenges. The U.S. military has belatedly recognized the need to address the COIN challenge. Enormous energy is now being devoted to the "engines of change"—revising doctrine, revamping training, restructuring organizations, adding elements (e.g. Special Forces, intel units, infantrymen, military police, etc.), introducing new equipment, and even dramatically adapting schoolhouse curricula—all informed by a robust effort to capture insights and lessons from ongoing operations. Much of this version of transformation is the antithesis of the information- and technology-centric transformation

touted within the Beltway. The process of change relies heavily on the vision and leadership of key individuals in the Army, including Petraeus and Lieutenant General Peter Chiarelli, Commander of the Multi-National Corps, Iraq. Having experienced the realities of Operation Iraqi Freedom, these leaders have recognized a responsibility to prepare troops to meet the wars that call them, not the wars they might prefer to fight.

Yet there should be no illusions about the simplicity of the task. There is a reason that T.E. Lawrence likened fighting guerrillas to "eating soup with a knife." It remains counter-institutional within the armed forces—and countercultural within the United States—to think and prepare seriously for this form of warfare. COIN, like the broader struggle against terrorism, ultimately requires Americans to think differently about conflict.

II. Risk in COIN

COIN demands that intervening forces accept greater levels of risk than they would in conventional conflicts. The concept of risk employed in this essay differs somewhat from its most common use in operational planning. In the military lexicon, risk is the probability and severity of loss linked to hazards to personnel, equipment or mission. Risk management requires balancing risk and mission benefits. In 2003, U.S. commanders proved willing to accept risk by sending relatively small numbers of ground forces into the heart of Iraq without waiting for air power to degrade Iraqi units; the daring of the thunder run into Baghdad was another instance of risk acceptance.

COIN demands a different form of risk tolerance. In counterinsurgency, there is a direct relationship between exercising restraint in the use of force and achieving long-term mission success. The tension between risks to men and mission accomplishment cannot be resolved through additional firepower, mass, or speed. What might be a strategic advantage in a conventional conflict can be a liability in COIN. Successful commanders recognized this fact. In Iraq, some imposed more restrictive rules of engagement than common conceptions of self-defense would deem prudent (e.g., respond

only to accurate fire, and only if the shooter can be identified). Consider the example of Lieutenant Colonel Chris Hughes, commander of the 2d Battalion, 327th Infantry, whom President Bush praised for defusing a potentially explosive clash with Iraqi townspeople in Najaf. Hughes responded to growing violence from an angry crowd of hundreds by commanding his soldiers to kneel and point their weapons to the ground. His was an effective but unconventional response. Consider, too, the instances in which U.S. Soldiers and Marines have used nonlethal methods or a calculated additional moment to avoid turning a checkpoint incident into a tragedy. There is no question that the restrained use of force can, certainly by individual incident and in the short term, equate to increased physical risk for counterinsurgent forces. Yet counterinsurgency demands increased acceptance of physical risks to forces in order to enhance the prospects for strategic success.

This is an operational requirement—not a normative preference. It must be factored into the design and conduct of counterinsurgency operations. The risk differential helps explain why COIN appears to require counterintuitive thinking and actions on the part of military forces, particularly with regard to the emphasis given to force protection. Failure to understand why and how risk levels must differ in COIN can undermine the prospects for mission success.

Risk tolerance is reflected at the strategic and operational levels during campaign planning when forces and capabilities are allocated. At the tactical level, guidance regarding the escalation of force and specific rules of engagement play a larger role in shaping degrees of risk. U.S. forces assume different force-protection postures based on a variety of factors, including political objectives, threat assessment, and nature of the mission. By law, policy, and doctrine, U.S. forces generally seek to minimize risk to the maximum extent possible.

COIN is a particularly dynamic, decentralized, and three-dimensional form of warfare because the strategic, operational, and tactical levels of operation are more interdependent than in typical conventional operations and because the end-state cannot be achieved strictly by military means.

Both the level of threat and focus of tactical effort may differ dramatically among sectors and over time. Moreover, political considerations—the most overarching of which is the need to create and support Host-Nation (HN) legitimacy—must have primacy. For these reasons, a short-term focus on minimizing risks to counterinsurgent forces can ironically increase the risks to the larger campaign, including the longer-term vulnerability of U.S. forces.

Of course, many insurgent groups exhibit different attitudes about risk—risk to their own forces and risk to the civilian population—further complicating the challenge for U.S. forces. Cultural, political, religious, or other factors often imbue insurgencies with significant casualty tolerance. The United States was slow to accept this fact in Vietnam. U.S. forces today struggle with an enemy willing to execute suicide missions and invert the laws of war by routinely targeting and placing civilians at risk. These insurgent attitudes and tactics not only undermine "rational" approaches to risk, they vastly complicate U.S. responses on the battlefield.

Enhancing the safety of U.S. forces has involved both concepts and actions (including passive and active measures). Operational concepts and tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTP) may variously emphasize risk assumption or minimization. Passive measures include improved intelligence, body armor, and heavily protected vehicles. Active measures frequently equate to greater reliance on the use of force. This reliance has several dimensions, including the speed/frequency of employing kinetic versus non-kinetic means, the routine application of greater levels of force, and the application of force from greater distances and/or with less definitive target identification.

When force protection is of paramount concern, the resulting decisions and actions can produce a myriad of unintended negative effects. For example, commanders might require that troops operate only in large numbers with heavy firepower, they might rely on airpower instead of infantry where the latter is more appropriate, or they might direct vehicles to move routinely at high speeds. Sometimes these courses of action are entirely

appropriate. However, each of these examples can have broader second-order effects. The large-convoy requirement may impede flexibility and intelligence gathering, privileging airpower could result in more intense applications of firepower than necessary for specific objectives, and speeding vehicles can inadvertently antagonize or injure civilians. These results are inconsistent with the principles of effective counterinsurgency.

In fact, the short-term tolerance of casualties is directly linked to strategic success. This central paradox is noted in the new COIN manual: the more you protect your force, the less secure you are. But this point is not yet widely understood or accepted within U.S. circles.

Strategic value of risk tolerance. Increased assumption of risk is implicit in the following objectives, each of which is critical for enhancing HN legitimacy and overall COIN success:

● *Minimize civilian impact and backlash*. COIN must restore security and normalcy for the population and be conducted in a manner that enhances HN legitimacy. Attaining passive or active indigenous civilian support hinges in large measure on the degree of confidence that the HN, not the insurgents, can provide a more secure future. Frequent and swift reliance upon force, or routine application of maximum allowable (versus minimum required) firepower can cause unnecessary civilian harm and thereby antagonize the local population. Such actions can crucially affect the attitudes and motivations of sympathetic or neutral civilians, which can dry up local information and cooperation and create sympathy, support, and recruits for insurgents. Unless U.S. military operations are conducted with significant risk tolerance, they may create more enemies than they eliminate.

● *Facilitate integrated operations*. Higher risk acceptance often proves essential for creating a greater level of security for the nonmilitary partners needed for a broader counterinsurgency effort. The military alone cannot provide economic reconstruction, political reform, and social assistance on the scale or for the duration that most COIN requires. Nonmilitary actors, to include other USG agencies, contractors, international and regional organizations, host nation agencies, and NGOs must be able to operate safely and effectively on the ground. The precise nature or degree of security required for different types of actors and organizations has not yet been clearly defined, and the military needs greater clarity on this point. Yet it is self-evident that the more secure the environment, the more numerous and significant in scale nonmilitary efforts can be. In the absence of adequate security, the nonmilitary aspects of counterinsurgency efforts cannot take hold and the prospects for strategic success are greatly reduced.

● *Show American values*. Restraint on the part of U.S. forces can enhance positive perceptions of the United States and, by extension, the HN itself. Closely controlled use of force and greater risk tolerance demonstrate an American commitment to the highest ethical, moral, and legal standards. In addition to avoiding harm to U.S./HN reputations, such restraint offers the local population (and HN security forces) a clearly preferable model of conduct. U.S. officials frequently bemoan the inadequacy of the government's communications efforts in both ongoing wars and the broader fight against terrorism. U.S. actions are likely to prove the most effective communications tools. When U.S. actions are consistent with American values, information operations can more effectively contrast U.S./HN values and actions with those of the insurgents or terrorists. Concrete and consistent examples, coupled with the civilian population's personal experiences, are the most powerful route toward countering insurgent propaganda.

● *Demonstrate U.S. resolve*. Greater risk assumption, when understood and accepted in the United States, can also signal the strength of the U.S. commitment to mission success. U.S. forces continue to suffer from a worldwide perception that casualties will erode domestic support for military operations. Low risk tolerance—particularly outside the spectrum of high-intensity conventional conflict—only strengthens that perception, which in turn increases risks to all Americans.

Therefore, even where the intensity of violence is high, it is often counterproductive to use force in a manner that—while fully consistent with conventional doctrine and training—could undermine the strategic purpose of counterinsurgency. The emerging emphasis on escalation-of-force measures in Iraq reflects a growing awareness of the problem.

In sum, while acceptance of greater risk alone will not guarantee success, it remains a necessary ingredient in any COIN strategy. Because more risk is likely required to achieve both military and *nonmilitary* success, increased risk tolerance may be the linchpin on which COIN success ultimately hinges.

Moving from principle to practice. The new COIN field manual, to its great credit, acknowledges the need for greater risk tolerance. Yet it is one thing to state the point; gaining widespread acceptance of this principle and then transforming it into practice will prove far more difficult. Increased risk assumption has obvious implications across the spectrum of routine and pre-deployment training, doctrine, and education. It must also be factored into operational design and anticipated troop-to-task ratios across the spectrum of capabilities, to include logistics and medical support. For example, some of the most successful units in Operation Iraqi Freedom swapped firepower for additional intelligence specialists and conducted more frequent but smaller patrols. It is worth noting that civilians in government must similarly address questions of increased risk tolerance if they are to be effective partners in COIN.

There are many reasons for both conceptual and practical resistance to rethinking risk. First, for decades conventional doctrine and training have stressed the primacy of firepower and technology in operations and have increasingly emphasized the importance of force-protection measures. Force protection has also been a priority at the lower end of the spectrum of operations, such as during stability operations in the Balkans. The broader risk aversion of American society generally has helped create a political-military culture that, in *relative* terms, has been shielded from risk.

Furthermore, the inherent nature of COIN poses additional barriers to assuming greater risk in practice. For one thing, the successful conduct

of COIN requires empowering lower level commanders with maximum flexibility to adapt to local conditions and opportunities. While decentralized responsibility is essential for adaptive operations, it can create additional psychological barriers to reducing the emphasis on force protection.

The problem is amplified by the apparent absence of immediate and concrete advantage in assuming greater risk. Simply put, COIN success is elusive and difficult to measure. Instead of a radical and lasting tactical military or political victory, success often lies in simply mitigating counterproductive effects (avoiding the foul). Yet justifying decisions is easier when, at the end of the day, the hill is clearly taken, despite the losses that may have been incurred. When greater risk simply avoids harming overall operational objectives—without providing measurable progress—risk assumption may prove harder to sustain. Again, this is likely to be particularly acute in decentralized operations where the bigger picture is harder for a unit commander to assemble. Calculated in a strictly military context, the cost/benefit analysis of force protection can produce an equilibrium that does not meet the larger political campaign goals most effectively.

For all of these reasons, it may be necessary to appear to overstate the risk-assumption requirement in doctrine and training in order to induce the requisite changes in Soldiers' understanding and actions. COIN confronts an institutional history, practice, and set of assumptions that run in the other direction. There are obviously risks that such an overemphasis will be perceived as straying from prudent force protection. Therefore, just as the standing rules of engagement reiterate the self-defense requirement, so must any risk reorientation for COIN emphasize the continuing centrality of self-defense even as the escalation of force is to be more tightly controlled.

Central to any sustained change, though, is an expanded appreciation of the relationship of risk assumption to mission success and a COIN exit strategy. This is the logical conclusion of emergent efforts to define and implement escalation-of-force measures. To avoid creating more new enemies than a given operation eliminates; to demonstrate the pro-

fessionalism, moral distinction, and commitment of U.S. forces; and to enable non-American and nonmilitary actors to assume ultimate responsibility for the COIN effort, military forces must tolerate higher levels of risk in the conduct of COIN operations.

Equally important, civilian leaders must endorse and explain this operational requirement and ensure that the American public accepts the risk corollary of counterinsurgency. Our democratic system of government and the voluntary character of our armed forces require all Americans to grapple with the risk requirements for successful counterinsurgency. In turn, greater risk tolerance must be factored into all aspects of COIN, most critically any national command authority decision to commence a counterinsurgency campaign. While the risk corollary may be difficult for American leaders and citizens to accept, it is vital for the United States' ability to fight the Long War effectively.

III. A National COIN Strategy

Given the relative paucity of official thinking and writing on counterinsurgency during the past four decades, there is insufficient USG understanding of COIN among both military and nonmilitary actors. In an effort to fill the vacuum of knowledge across all levels of the USG, the draft field manual shifted uneasily between strategic guidance and the minutiae of tactics, techniques, and procedures. The authors recognized the danger of depriving Soldiers of a workable field manual, but at the same time they understood the document's potential role in helping orient a broader and higher level USG audience toward COIN principles and requirements. The interrelationship between political decisionmaking on the one hand and military requirements and execution on the other is glaringly apparent in COIN. And while the military desire to plug USG knowledge gaps is understandable, ultimately the civilian leadership must take responsibility for creating a counterinsurgency "meta-doctrine."

Craft national doctrine. The most startling feature of the field manual is the primacy it accords to the political. The manual purveys military doctrine, yet that doctrine recognizes that the military frame-

work and military tools have limited utility in the overall campaign. Political reform, communications strategies, economic development efforts, and other civilian activities are critical aspects of responding to an insurgency. It is axiomatic, therefore, that the ultimate success of COIN hinges upon the civilian conceptualization of the COIN challenge and the broader USG response.

How civilian actors carry out their responsibilities, or fail to coordinate or execute them, will of course have a significant impact on the ground. But unity of effort and competence in execution are meaningless unless unity of purpose has been collectively articulated and agreed upon. If military units individually achieve tactical goals with mutually contradictory results, we can hardly consider their efforts a success. Doctrine exists to provide conceptual coherence, supported by standardized and coordinated execution. Because of its ongoing responsibilities in Afghanistan and Iraq and its institutional reliance upon doctrine, the military has sought to fill the conceptual vacuum. Yet the primacy of the political in COIN demands that military doctrine flow from the creation of an integrated civil-military approach to COIN.

To conduct COIN effectively, though, much of what the military does on the ground should flow from clearly articulated U.S. policy guidance on everything from support of political reform to economic development, including related expectations of the host nation. In reality, though, such clarity does not always exist, in part because of unresolved tensions between the military and civilian sides and amongst civilian agencies. Even before issues of resources and roles are engaged, COIN operations can be hobbled by competing orthodoxies about achieving the general goals or the desired sequencing and prioritization of efforts.

The most basic elements of a COIN strategy still beg a myriad of questions. Take the goal of political reform. Is it necessarily synonymous with democratization? Do the local citizens and leaders shape that process? Will promoting national elections increase or decrease national unity or the security situation? How should the United States reconcile an American fixation on civil and political rights with the economic

and social needs that may be more pressing for the local population? The goal of economic reconstruction can be similarly deceptive. What principles should guide the effort? Meeting humanitarian need? Advancing the political process? Rewarding cooperation with the host nation? Three years into the Iraq war, the United States is still debating whether to focus assistance on immediate employment of Iraqi men to help stabilize communities and improve security or on broader economic reform and privatization, which can increase social dislocation, at least in the short term. Transporting unexamined U.S. policy orthodoxy into a COIN context can prove problematic.

In almost every arena (or line of operation), U.S. counterinsurgent efforts will struggle to reconcile American ideas and values with local traditions, culture, and history, as well as to define the limits of that compromise. These challenges should be articulated and analyzed closely. For example, what are U.S. expectations regarding local institutions' respect for human rights, degree of corruption, or enforcement of the rule of law? How should the USG respond when the host nation government or its institutions fail to meet those expectations? And at what point does T.E. Lawrence's admonition—that it is better for locals to perform a task tolerably than for outsiders to do it for them—simply no longer hold?

Without guidelines on these points, military and civilian counterinsurgent actors will send mixed messages and potentially work at cross purposes. If an Army captain is left to improvise, he may do remarkable work within his area of operation, but major disconnects are foreseeable: the political council he appoints may be vitiated by the national election strategy; the corruption or abuse he refuses to tolerate may simply migrate to a more forgiving district; the economic incentives he uses to maintain stability may be undone by the central government's shock therapy. Competing orthodoxies, standards, and priorities should be articulated, debated, and resolved collectively by the USG before individual actors are forced to address them in their areas of responsibility. Unity of purpose is a prerequisite for unity of effort.

Know your capabilities. After attaining greater conceptual clarity about COIN strategy, the United States can more usefully consider whether it possesses the expertise and capabilities required to implement that strategy. A COIN capacity assessment will rediscover many known deficiencies. Some harken from the early 1990's when the USG renewed its nation-building activities in peace operations: cumbersome and bureaucratic economic assistance processes; too few civil affairs units and translators; insufficient or nonexistent adaptive security capabilities—particularly those bridging police and military functions. Other COIN shortfalls will be unique or refinements of known shortfalls. For example, Iraq highlights the need to develop effective ministerial capacity to oversee the military, police, and intelligence services early in COIN operations. There must also be HN capacity in critical financial and economic sectors. Which U.S. agencies have that responsibility and are their capacities sufficient given the centrality of those functions?

Develop the right people. Any examination of the government's capacity is likely to conclude that a well-prepared cadre of personnel remains a key shortfall. COIN requires individuals with hybrid political-military sensibility, the ability to think and act across labels and stovepipes, a single-minded and empathetic focus on host-nation legitimacy coupled with an improvisational, results-oriented attitude. Through both experience and training, the armed forces have come to understand or even adopt many "civilian" roles and tasks (e.g., conducting negotiations, facilitating political activities, administering municipalities), whereas many civilian actors continue to view the military aspects of COIN as entirely other and apart. Cultural differences between military and civilian USG actors impede communication, let alone unity of effort. Some State Department personnel express discomfort with the term counterinsurgency to describe their efforts in Iraq and elsewhere. In 1962, the State Department fully embraced responsibility for coordinating counterinsurgency and foreign internal defense activities. There was no question about the need for familiarity with

and appreciation of all elements of national power. Our U.S. personnel systems, from education and training to promotion and assignment, must do more to familiarize civilians with military culture and operations and to integrate civilian and military personnel in professional-development activities related to COIN.

A related aspect of developing people with the right mindset and knowledge is the need to empower them to act effectively. There is a tension between the autonomy and flexibility required for effective decentralized operations and the accountability demanded of those responsible for dispersing significant funds at the local level. Should U.S. legal requirements regarding small-scale contracting, assistance, compensation, and other uses of funds be relaxed in the context of ongoing armed conflict? This is a different issue from preventing fraud and abuse by major private corporations, as proved problematic in Iraq.

Unless COIN actors, both civilian and military, can respond quickly to local need, they may find themselves irrelevant. Consider Hezbollah's immediate and small-scale provision of relief following the recent ceasefire in Lebanon. Congressional suspicions regarding the Commander's Emergency Response Fund program suggests unresolved larger issues and a lack of understanding of COIN requirements. Cumbersome procedures, however well-intentioned, may be inconsistent with the trust and flexibility COIN requires from USG personnel on the ground.

Align responsibilities with capacity. COIN capacity should also be considered in a broader context. What advantages does the U.S. Government have compared to other actors, such as private contractors, NGOs, allied states, or international agencies? There is a difference, of course, between the ideal division of labor and the actual partnerships that are likely to occur in a particular COIN operation. Indeed, this reality often prompts military commanders to advocate for some degree of United Nations or multinational involvement in interventions. Even as it develops contingency plans for acting without partners, U.S. national strategy should recognize and plan for the ideal of a shared effort.

In USG planning, agencies must confront the difference between

nominal responsibility and ability to execute. For the military, it matters little that the Justice Department is best suited to a particular task if it will rarely be in a position to carry it out. Obtaining greater clarity, not simply about which USG agencies "own" issues or tasks, but whether how and in what timeframe they can achieve those goals, is vital. This assessment would include not only resources, expertise, and legal authorities, but also a realistic appraisal of the availability of personnel to operate effectively in a COIN environment of increased security risks.

The underlying question is whether military forces must be prepared to take on *all* tasks in COIN or whether civilian actors can become effective partners in a low-intensity-conflict environment. There are few political incentives for addressing the questions, and thus the issue festers unresolved. If the civilian capacity can be effectively addressed, it makes more sense to enhance field capabilities where substantive knowledge and bureaucratic authority is already located. Should the government as a whole be unwilling to reallocate resources to enable the "right" actors or agencies to perform needed responsibilities, it had best reassign those responsibilities. Yet progressive militarization of COIN, or of U.S. foreign policy generally, would further undermine the likelihood of success in both arenas. Only when the USG faces the implications squarely is it likely to take the requisite action to enhance civilian capacity.

Even integrated political-military planning, a shibboleth of the USG for decades, remains a theory, not a practice. The creation of the State Department's Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization (S/CRS) offers hope of a home for civilian COIN planning and activity. The proof, however, lies in the pudding of decisionmaking and resource allocation. The planned $100 million transfer from the Department of Defense to S/CRS is symptomatic of the underlying problem and not a lasting solution. The DOD "gift" is positive only if it never needs to be repeated because adequate funding will have been made available in future State Department budgets. A facade of civilian capacity, buttressed by stopgap military actions, serves no one.

Lines of authority. Unity of command is a sacrosanct concept and practice within the armed forces. The primacy of politics throughout COIN, however, suggests a potential flaw in conceiving of independent civilian and military spheres of action. The uncertain ad hoc accords established between a U.S. ambassador and force commander certainly leave much to be desired. Yet implicit requirement to subsume military command within civilian authority even at the operational level would challenge widely held military and civilian expectations and, frankly, most civilian abilities. At the same time, the model British colonial administrator, a military officer fusing civilian efforts into a holistic strategy, seems an icon of the past.

Without an easy answer to the unity of command question, policymakers default to promoting "unity of effort"—an idea more appealing in theory than effective in practice. The use of "handshake-con"—achieving informal understandings amongst various leaders of parallel efforts in the field—has been successful where U.S. military officials have had the vision and stamina to implement it. Such intense personal engagements offer an alternative to a formal chain of command or a pro forma but ineffective coordinating arrangement. But handshake-con may be better suited for foreign and local military forces than working across agency lines, and even then it is highly personality-dependent. This underscores the importance of developing that hybrid persona, the government professional familiar with both the military and civilian components of COIN and how the pieces must work together in support of the host-nation and COIN strategy. A cadre of such professionals will enhance the prospects for actually achieving unity of effort and might eventually allow consideration of unity of command.

Next steps. While revising military doctrine is essential, it is only a partial step toward crafting an effective national COIN strategy. To maximize U.S. success, military doctrine should flow from a political-military concept of operations. This would create greater understanding of the capabilities, assumptions, and appropriate synergies among military and nonmilitary capabilities

and policies than currently exists. Unity of concept must precede unity of effort.

It is highly encouraging, then, that the State Department is embarking upon an interagency effort to create a framework for COIN. With an initial meeting scheduled for September 2006, the stated aim is to produce a National Security Presidential Directive outlining an analytic framework, U.S. agency roles and missions, and capacity gaps. It will certainly be useful to bring together governmental actors in charge of various aspects of COIN in order to codify their operating principles and capabilities. Unfortunately, after several years of effort in Afghanistan and Iraq, U.S. agencies are still disputing economic policies, the relationship of security to political reform, and the relative resourcing of civilian and military effort. This underscores the importance of first defining a unified strategy.

The challenge in any USG interagency effort is that the process tends to replicate the very stovepipes and capacity weaknesses at the core of the problem. Furthermore, interagency processes often reach nominal agreement by skirting central issues and finessing tough choices. The 1994 presidential directive on peace operations followed this pattern, and there is little reason to believe COIN, in all its complexity, will fare differently.

It therefore would be beneficial to create an outside group—a blue-ribbon commission or advisory panel—to bring a fresh, objective, and comprehensive approach to this topic. The commission would necessarily involve government agencies, but would stand apart in formulating an integrated strategy. It is particularly important, given the politics of the Iraq war, that the commission be bipartisan in composition and outlook. These days, it is unfashionable, and perhaps atavistic, to call for bipartisan efforts. But COIN is a challenge facing the USG for the foreseeable future, not a unique problem for the current administration. Even a sound presidential directive will lack the consensus and support needed to sustain it over the longer term. Since a national COIN strategy is a long-term proposition, building a unified and bipartisan approach is critical for the Nation.

IV. Final Thoughts

The forthcoming field manual on COIN remains a signal accomplishment: it articulates a modern approach to counterinsurgency while affirming COIN's enduring but decidedly counterintuitive principles. It would be a mistake, however, to believe that the updated doctrine settles the question of how the United States should prosecute its Long War or the smaller counterinsurgency campaigns within it.

In any struggle that ultimately hinges on winning over or neutralizing an ambivalent civilian population, those wielding force must do so with great care. Like it or not, the United States Armed Forces are held to the highest standard with regard to how they fight. Both the military and the broader public that supports them prefer to avoid considering the question of risk tolerance. Yet in counterinsurgency, U.S. unwillingness to assume risk may be the most severe limitation on its COIN efforts. This is as great a challenge to the body politic as it is to the uniformed military, although only the uniformed military can effectively make the case for change in this arena.

The military must look to civilian authorities first, though, when it comes to the nonmilitary aspects of COIN. The U.S. Government as a whole must pony up to the demands of counterinsurgency. It's become vogue to cite a lack of interagency cooperation and civilian capacity in Iraq and beyond. Yet the prior failing is conceptual. It's difficult to codify process or build capacity in the absence of a universal doctrinal framework. More narrowly, even the extant military doctrine is on shaky ground when broader governmental assumptions, principles, and requirements remain unknown or ad hoc. Creating a common understanding of insurgency and the demands for defeating it remains a core challenge for the nation. **MR**

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The Leadership Battlebook:
A Practical Approach to Leader Self-Development

Lieutenant Colonel Ted A. Thomas
USA, Retired, Ph.D.

. . . I love the man that can smile in trouble, that can gather strength from distress, and grow brave by reflection. 'Tis the business of little minds to shrink; but he whose heart is firm, and whose conscience approves his conduct, will pursue his principles unto death.

—Thomas Paine[1]

Thomas Paine emphasizes several important concepts that leaders need to take to heart—"big minds" develop talents, skills, thoughts, and reasoning and devote time and effort to developing the competencies involved with leading. Leading involves pursuing self-development, seeking excellence, knowing one's strengths and weaknesses, and taking action.

The Army Training and Leader Development Model features three domains for leader development: institutional, operational, and self-development. Although the institutional domain is paramount to development, most leaders recognize that the bulk of their learning occurs on the job.[2] It is in the operational domain that the leader really hones his unique craft. Staff rides, professional development classes, tactical exercises without troops (TEWT), terrain walks, computer simulations, and myriad other programs develop leaders' competence in a profound manner. The operational domain is also the place where individual development action plans are produced jointly between leaders and supervisors.

The institutional and operational domains are well structured, well defined in doctrine, and generally well implemented. However, they do not offer enough to allow the leader to realize his full potential. Only by actively seeking self-development can a leader achieve his optimum potential. Yet, of the three domains, self-development is the least well structured, defined, or executed. According to the ATLDP Officer Study Report, "Army training and leadership doctrine does not adequately address it, Army leaders do not emphasize its value, and the Army does not provide the tools and support to enable its leaders to make self-development an effective component of lifelong learning."[3] This article looks at why leader self-development is so important and suggests a practical approach to implement and monitor a viable self-development program.

The Importance of Leader Self-Development

Army leaders are servants of the Nation. In times of war, they carry the primary burden for victory or defeat; in times of peace, they are the primary drivers to mission accomplishment. Consequently, Army leaders have an obligation to develop their leadership competencies to the utmost. They accomplish this through disciplined, daily study and reflection, and by seizing every opportunity to better themselves. As President Ronald Reagan once said: "The character that takes command in moments of crucial choices has already been determined by a thousand other choices made earlier in

seemingly unimportant moments…. It has been determined by all the day-to-day decisions made when life seemed easy and crises seemed far away–the decisions that, piece-by-piece, bit-by-bit, developed habits of discipline or of laziness; habits of self-sacrifice or self-indulgence; habits of duty and honor and integrity–or dishonor and shame."[4]

A leader's daily life is full of opportunities and choices. What leaders do with these opportunities and choices can help either to optimize their leadership development or to let it languish. Army leaders should care about the daily decisions they make regarding self-development and the development of their subordinates.

Self-development involves introspective examination of one's strengths and weaknesses and includes a conscious effort—a choice—to improve certain areas of one's character and abilities. Leaders who pursue self-development in earnest become more confident, better able to solve complex problems, and more qualified to make decisions against a thinking, agile, and asymmetric enemy in times of uncertainty, fear, and chaos.[5] Self-development empowers leaders, yields greater job satisfaction, develops competencies needed to accomplish missions, and broadens a leader's vision; thus, it prepares the leader to take on positions of increasing responsibility.

Organizations permeated with self-development programs enjoy higher morale and an increased sense of commitment. They develop a culture that inspires people, sparks innovation, and engenders cooperation; they achieve a level of excellence that makes extraordinary accomplishments possible; and they are able to sustain the pace of change required in today's dynamic environment.[6]

The concept of self-development is codified in Army policy and doctrine. Field Manual (FM) 22-100, *Army Leadership*, says Army members are obligated to develop their abilities to the greatest extent possible and to assist subordinates in doing likewise.[7] Field Manual 3-0, *Operations*, emphasizes that it is every leader's duty to become competent at his job "through continual training and self-study."[8] U.S. Department of the Army (DA) Pamphlet 350-58, *The Enduring Legacy—Leader Development for America's Army*, adds that self-development is "a joint effort involving commanders, leaders, supervisors, and subordinates. The individual and his leader structure self-development actions to meet specific individual goals and needs."[9] Perhaps no one has articulated the self-development imperative more eloquently than General Omar N. Bradley: "For most men, the matter of learning is one of personal preference. But for Army officers, the obligation to learn and grow in their professions, is clearly a public duty."[10]

The 2000 ATLDP report shows that most Army leaders know self-development is important for professional growth and essential for lifelong learning.[11] However, a study of over 400 captains attending the Combined Arms and Services Staff School in 2002 found that almost two-thirds rated themselves as having performed little to no self-study.[12] This gap between the perceived need for self-development and its actual pursuit indicates a need for command involvement, which can provide the feedback essential to make a self-development program work. Feedback is necessary because we are all somewhat blind to our own behavior and to what others really think about us; we might think we are developing, or we might believe that our boss is pleased with what we're doing, but we can be wrong. Feedback also provides a means of accountability, encouraging the leader to pursue his goals. In sum, the leader who aspires to self-development needs a leader battlebook.

The Leadership Battlebook

The leadership battlebook is a practical self-development tool for the leader and his chain of command. It can take many forms and can be as simple as a three-ring binder with dividers containing different sections or topics. Whatever form it takes, the battlebook should be divided into topic areas specific to the individual's development. The following nine topics are given as examples.

Warfighting and training tips. This niche provides a place for the leader to collect information and tips on the Army leader's primary business: training and warfighting. Putting this section first enforces the need to strengthen the warrior ethos and maintain a warfighting focus. Leaders can tailor the content of this section to address their personal needs and interests. For example, a combat engineer might want to learn more about rapid repair of roads damaged by explosives, so he would collect the pertinent tactics, techniques, and procedures, and write them down in this section.

Leadership models and theories. To develop a deeper, broader understanding of leadership, Army leaders need to know both Army and civilian leadership models and theories. Nonmilitary leadership models may focus on such subjects as transformation, ethics, teams, situations, skills, traits, styles, or gender, to name but a few. One worthy nonmilitary model to consider here would be Bruce Avolio's Full-Range Leadership Model, which emphasizes transformational leadership. Avolio's lessons on transforming the organization through inspirational motivation, individualized consideration, idealized influence, and intellectual stimulation are applicable to most leadership situations.[13]

Each theory, whether nonmilitary or military, will have some relevance in different cases. For example, the Army's current "Be, Know, Do" model focuses on the values, attributes, skills, and actions of its leaders, thereby providing an effective framework for developing the competencies needed to lead the future modular force. The new Army leadership manual, FM 6-22 (currently in draft), may change the competency framework, but it will still emphasize competencies.[14]

360-degree assessments and evaluations. The ATLDP report declares two leadership requirements—self-awareness and adaptability—to be "metacompetencies"; that is, they are foundations for all other competencies. A self-aware leader knows his strengths and weaknesses, his nature, talents, emotional stability, and capabilities.[15] Self-awareness is a prerequisite to adaptability: Without it leaders do not have the necessary tools to adapt to unforeseen exigencies. Likewise, leaders who are self-aware, but too hidebound or otherwise unable to adapt quickly, become irrelevant to their operational environment and, hence, dangerous to their Soldiers and to the mission. Leaders who are open to candid feedback from a variety of sources and echelons

inside and outside their organization will go a long way toward achieving self-awareness.

Many assessment tools are available to help leaders achieve greater self-awareness. The officer evaluation report is one, as is the newly mandated individual development plan (IDP) each officer is required to create. The Army is also piloting a 360-degree assessment meant to identify a leader's five main strengths and five weaknesses. Other assessment tools, such as the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator and the Adaptive Skills Inventory, should also be maintained in this section. These tools help the leader understand how he learns, how he interacts with people, how he relates to the outside world, and how he processes information, thereby helping him become a better leader who can interact with and motivate his subordinates more effectively.

This section lets the leader compare his self-assessments with the assessments of his peers, subordinates, superiors, coaches, and mentors. Such comparisons help leaders deduce trends regarding their strengths and weaknesses. Armed with this knowledge, leaders can determine their developmental needs, then plan and execute a successful self-development program.

Goals. Self-awareness leads to self-regulation, that is, the desire to act on the knowledge of personal strengths and weaknesses gained through self-awareness. Self-regulation is an extension of self-awareness; it helps leaders set goals to correct leadership deficiencies and become more innovative, adaptable, and flexible. Goals define a desired end-state that leaders envision for their self-development program, so that they can set a proper azimuth to take them from self-awareness to that end-state. Hence, leaders must have clear goals to help them determine self-development plans.

Leaders should take care to link their goal-setting with the assessments and evaluations from the previous section. Areas needing improvement or weaknesses identified in the previous section are certainly good places to start. Leaders should also specify goals as either short, intermediate, or long term to ensure a natural progression in achieving them. Specificity counts; the more specific the goal, the more likely it is to be achieved.

Finally, leaders should devise a list of actions to be taken to turn goals into achievements. The list should include a timetable as well.

Leadership, leader, and command philosophies. This section contains the individual's personal leadership, leader, and command philosophies. Leadership philosophy is the leader's personal philosophy; it includes values, priorities, how he leads, and other leadership items important to him. The leader philosophy builds on the leadership philosophy by applying the latter to the leader's assigned organization. The command philosophy applies the leader philosophy to a commander's position; it requires him to describe, among other things, his vision for how the organization will achieve its desired end-state.

As a leader matures and his responsibilities change from direct to organizational to strategic level, each of the three philosophies of leadership are also likely to change. Hence, these philosophies should be reviewed frequently and the leader's values and priorities reaffirmed. Putting his philosophy into words will help the leader decide who he is and how his core beliefs relate to his organization. It will help him think through his values, expectations, and priorities. Personal leadership, leader, and command philosophies serve the organization well because they establish the leader's more enduring intent.

Book reviews. Professional reading has long been recognized as key to the Army leader's development. Thus, it comes as no surprise that there are many professional reading lists available, including one from the Army Chief of Staff.[16] Unlike the average reader, the leader must focus his reading if he seeks self-development. He also has to digest and capture what he reads, so he needs a format for reviewing books, one that addresses what the book is about, why he is reading it, what lessons he might learn from it, and any memorable quotations it might contain. To aid in reviewing and retention, he should take notes while he reads. A paper folded in thirds and inserted in the book provides an easy way to take notes; it will assist the leader in retrieving references, quotations, and lessons learned from the book.

Mentoring tips. Although the Army has no formal or mandatory mentorship program, Army leaders clearly recognize that mentorship, when applied appropriately, is a great way to develop and improve leadership. Every leader should find one or more mentors for self-development and in turn act as a mentor for other leaders. Mentoring relationships don't necessarily have to be between a senior officer and a junior; they can be between officers and NCOs or retirees or anyone the leader thinks can help his professional development.

This section of the battlebook provides a place for the leader to record questions he might ask his mentor and the subsequent answers or advice he receives. The leader can also record advice he gives to someone he is mentoring, as well as contact information for his mentors and those he advises.

Leadership journals. Here, the leader can record his thoughts on leadership. Generals George S. Patton and Omar Bradley and German Field Marshal Erwin Rommel, among others, captured their thoughts in journals.[17] One way to begin a journal is for the leader to reflect on his career and identify defining moments in his leadership development. These might take the form of lessons learned from his own decisions (good or bad) or from his observations of another's leadership. They might also include lessons learned from movies, his children, lectures, news articles, or any activity or random thought. This advice about journals comes with a caveat: If the leader sees this section as a drill in journal keeping, it is doomed to failure before it begins.

Other. The last section functions as a catch-all for other leadership concepts or ideas. The 2004 study *Leadership Lessons at Division Command Level* lists several areas that could fit in this section, among them interpersonal skills, team building, improving command climate, and coaching and counseling.[18] Additional topics might include ethical decisionmaking or the role of faith in leadership. A list of websites could be also placed here.

The Bottom Line

Leaders who would guide the future modular force to full-spectrum dominance in current and emerging operational environments

can no longer pass on self-development. Nor can their organizations, since self-development programs achieve their best results when organizations are actively involved. Leaders, in fact, have an obligation to make their own development and the development of their subordinates a priority. By doing so, they augment the developmental efforts made in the institutional and operational domains to benefit the individual and the organization.

A leadership battlebook can be a useful tool for leaders serious about self-development. Again, a three-ring binder and a few dividers are all one needs to get started. If some sections aren't currently needed, then populate them later; if additional ones are needed, just add them. Whatever form it ultimately takes, the battlebook can be an effective means by which leaders and organizations discharge their responsibility for a vitally important but often ignored program. **MR**

NOTES

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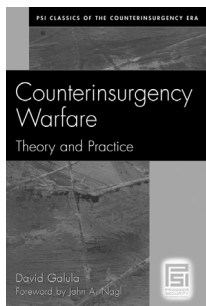
Counterinsurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice, David Galula, reviewed by Lieutenant Colonel Terence J. Daly, U.S. Army Reserve, Retired

When reading *Counterinsurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice* for the first time, most people have what could be called the Galula Moment: "That's it! He gets it!" French Army Lieutenant Colonel David Galula's book, first published in 1964, is quite simply the definitive work, the primer, of classic counterinsurgency doctrine.[1] It is the one book on counterinsurgency that everyone, from policymakers to fire-team leaders, should read and understand.

Galula's globe-trotting military career gave him numerous opportunities to study war, conventional and unconventional, close up. During World War II he fought in campaigns in North Africa, Italy, and Germany, became a military attaché, and then, in the immediate post-war period, served as an observer. He would later work as an assistant military attaché in China during that country's civil war and as a UN observer in Greece during the Greek civil war. Posted to Hong Kong on attaché duty, he developed and maintained contact with officers fighting insurgencies in Indochina, Malaya, and the Philippines. In 1956, Galula was assigned to the 45th Colonial Infantry Battalion, with which he spent the next two years fighting Algerian rebels, first as a company commander and then as an assistant battalion commander.

With all this experience under his belt, Galula was sent to Harvard's Center for International Affairs in 1962. While participating in a RAND Corporation symposium on counterinsurgency, he made such an impression that he was asked to write a treatise about his experiences in Algeria. The ensuing work was published in 1963 as *Pacification in Algeria, 1956-58*.[2] The following year, Galula produced his seminal *Counterinsurgency Warfare*. He died in 1967.

We know that Galula's main claim—you defeat an insurgency by controlling the target population—works. It worked for Galula when he commanded an understrength French infantry company in the harsh terrain of the Kabylia in Algeria, and it worked for the U.S. 3d Armored Cavalry Regiment (ACR) in Tal Afar in Iraq.[3]

The 3d ACR was required to read *Counterinsurgency Warfare* before it deployed. The book's lessons were suitably modified for the conditions the regiment was about to face, and then used to inform the planning and execution of their successful campaign to subdue the insurgency in Tal Afar. Currently, Galula's ideas pervade the new counterinsurgency manuals that are being developed for the U.S. Army and Marine Corps.

The Basics

Galula's basic insight into insurgency (which he terms "revolutionary war") is that "Revolutionary war is political war." The objective of the counterinsurgent must therefore be to win the population's support. According to Galula, French and American traditions stipulating that "military" activities should be handled only by Soldiers and Marines and "civilian" activities should be handled only by politicians and bureaucrats is

fallacious. "Every military action," he asserts, "has to be weighed with regard to its political effects and vice versa." This means that every sweep, every search-and-destroy mission, every convoy operation has to be planned with uppermost consideration for the effects it will have on the population's support; conversely, every new sewage system or classroom has to be examined for its military impact.[4]

According to Galula, the greatest advantage insurgents have over Western democracies, especially the United States, is that "an insurgency is a protracted struggle conducted…to attain specific intermediate objectives leading finally to the overthrow of the existing order." For the counterinsurgent, "the operations needed to relieve the population from the insurgent's threat and to convince it that the counterinsurgent will ultimately win are necessarily of an intensive nature and of long duration." Galula emphasizes that to fight a successful counterinsurgency, it is important to have a national consensus and a resolute political leadership.[5] In *Pacification in Algeria* he stresses that when the French Government was strong, insurgent recruiting dropped off because it looked like the counterinsurgents would win; however, when the French Government was weak and it looked like the French would leave Algeria, insurgent recruiting increased.[6]

As promulgated in the 1960s by Galula and Britain's Sir Robert Thompson (author of *Defeating Communist Insurgency: The Lessons of Malaya and Vietnam*), classic counterinsurgency theory is often criticized.[7] Detractors argue that fighting rural Marxist-Leninist insurgents is much different than fighting today's urban-based Muslim extremists. With the caveat that his concepts may be dangerous if applied rigidly to a specific case, Galula notes that it is difficult to deny the logic on which his concepts are based because they can be recognized easily in everyday political life.[8] He addresses a universal human condition when he lays out the essence of defeating an insurgency: "In any situation, whatever the cause, there will be an active minority for the cause, a neutral majority, and an active minority against the cause." In any insurgency, then, urban or rural, communist or confessional (religion-based),

each side must weaken or eliminate the opposition, strengthen its own backers among the populace, and win over the uncommitted.

The struggle will be waged ruthlessly, and it will be deadly. Galula makes no distinction between city or village dweller, ideologue, or religious fanatic when he states: "All wars are cruel, the revolutionary war perhaps most of all because every citizen, whatever his wish, is or will be directly and actively involved in it by the insurgent who needs him and cannot afford to let him remain neutral. The cruelty of the revolutionary war is not a mass, anonymous cruelty but a highly personalized, individual one."[9]

The struggle for influence is therefore dominated by another condition universal to all human beings in all insurgencies regardless of the environment: fear. Galula writes: "The population's attitude . . . is dictated not so much by the relative popularity and merits of the opponents as by the more primitive concern for safety. Which side gives the best protection, which side threatens the most, which one is likely to win; these are the criteria governing the population's stand." Meanwhile, "political, social, economic, and other reforms, however much they ought to be wanted and popular, are inoperative when offered while the insurgent still controls the population."

For Galula, control over the population is the key to success. Only by gaining and keeping control of the population can the counterinsurgent establish the secure environment in which those who support the counterinsurgent and his cause can come forward to organize for their own governance and eventual self-protection.

Galula describes, in detail, the steps by which the counterinsurgent can gain control of the population. Designed specifically for political effect, these steps comprise a coordinated, multifaceted process that provides the populace security in order to gain and keep its support. The counterinsurgent must use all his assets: "His administrative capabilities, his economic resources, his information and propaganda media, his military superiority due to heavy weapons and large units." Military, police, and judicial and political operations blend: "The expected result—final defeat of the insurgents—is not an addition but a

multiplication of these various operations; they all are essential and if one is nil, the product will be zero."[10]

The Need for Unity of Command

Galula is adamant about the necessity of heeding the military principle of unity of command: "A single boss must direct the operations from beginning to end." Further, the "boss" must be a representative of the political side: "That the political power is the undisputed boss is a matter of both principle and practicality. What is at stake is the country's political regime and to defend it is a political affair. Even if this requires military action, the action is directed toward a political goal."[11] If we read Galula correctly, then one major deficiency in the U.S. Government's current counterinsurgent effort is that no government department or agency is capable of exercising this authority.

The Strategy

According to Galula, in devising a countrywide strategic plan, it is best to begin by pacifying the quieter areas and then progressing to the more difficult ones. First, doing so gives the counterinsurgent "a clear-cut, even if geographically limited, success as soon as possible," which demonstrates that he has the will, the means, and the ability to win. Second, "the counterinsurgent, who usually has no practical experience in the nonmilitary operations required in counterinsurgency warfare, must acquire it fast," and that is much easier to do in a relatively calm area. Of course, this strategy is risky: by concentrating on the easy areas, the counterinsurgent leaves the insurgent alone to progress into other areas.[12] The counterinsurgent must, however, accept that risk.

The Phased Approach

In Galula's multi-phased approach to prosecuting this strategy, phase one, *concentrating enough armed forces to destroy or expel the main body of armed insurgents*, is undertaken to prepare the area for the rest of the counterinsurgency process. It is complete only when the forces that will garrison the area can safely deploy to the extent necessary. Military forces must prevent armed insurgents who have been scattered from regrouping; if the armed insurgents

have been expelled from the area, they must be prevented from returning. In this phase, the counterinsurgent must be prepared to fight conventional battles to dominate the area completely. Aggressive, carefully planned, and flexible information operations directed at the insurgents, the counterinsurgent's own forces, and the population must be thoroughly integrated into this and each succeeding phase of the operation.[13]

In phase two, *the counterinsurgent switches targets from the armed insurgents to the population*. He maintains strong military forces in the area, though, because the "support of the population is conditional." The people know they are being watched by the insurgency's supporters and are still threatened with punishment by armed guerrillas. Counterinsurgent forces are assigned to sectors, subsectors, and other divisions with the principal mission of protecting the population and civic action teams. The troops are deployed to locations where the people are, not to locations deemed to possess military value.[14]

Phase three, *maintain contact with and control of the population*, is the most critical phase because it involves transitioning from military to political operations. Galula's objectives include reestablishing the counterinsurgent's authority over the population, physically isolating the population from the guerrillas, and gathering intelligence that will lead to the next step: the elimination of insurgent cells.

Control of the population begins with a census and issuance of identity documents. A curfew is an integral part of phase three, as are other movement controls. Intelligence gathering is enhanced by increasing contact between the population and counterinsurgent personnel, each of whom must be imbued with the idea that he is an intelligence collector. Galula notes that because insurgents are human, they have differing degrees of commitment to the insurgent cause. The counterinsurgent therefore must attempt to divide the insurgents by creating dissension between the lower ranks and their leaders, which he then exploits by luring away the disaffected.[15]

Phase four, *eradicating insurgent secret political organizations*, is a sensitive area for the counterinsurgent. Secret insurgents are often prominent local people with local connections and family ties. Secret organizations must be eradicated to remove the threat they pose to counterinsurgent supporters and to keep the insurgency from reestablishing itself. Galula suggests an indirect approach, in which cell members are arrested based on their disclosures.[16]

Meanwhile, the counterinsurgent is deeply involved in recruiting, training, and vetting local supporters for the remaining parts of his program. These parts are built on the elections of provisional local officials, and they include testing the new officials, formation of self defense units, grouping new leaders into a national movement, and final eradication of insurgent remnants.[17]

The Myth of Sisyphus

For Galula, victory can be declared only when the local people cut off contact with the insurgents and keep them cut off of their own will, using their own resources. However, the myth of Sisyphus is a recurring nightmare for the counterinsurgent, as he must try to build in irreversibility at every step. The turning point will occur only after leaders emerge from the population, commit themselves to the side of the counterinsurgent, and form an organization that can protect them and the population. The leaders must prove their loyalty with deeds, not words, and they must have everything to lose if the insurgents return. Still, as Galula observes, even when the responsibility for the area is turned over to the local people, leaders, and security forces, the main counterinsurgent force must be able to return quickly to protect what it has left behind.

The Possible Drawback

Galula seems to provide a clear, comprehensive blueprint that democracies such as the United States can use to defeat an insurgency. His work has one major gap, however, as far as the United States is concerned: he attaches too little weight to the importance of the counterinsurgent's cause. Galula continually stresses that a cause is vital for the insurgent, but pays little attention to the counterinsurgent's motivation. Either the counterinsurgent simply wants to retain power, or he has a competing cause that Galula dismisses because it will lead to civil war. Even when

he notes that the British promised independence to Malaya during the Emergency, a move that cemented the loyalty of the majority ethnic Malay population, Galula seems to draw no particular conclusions regarding the effectiveness of the counterinsurgent's appropriating the insurgents' cause. For Galula, reforms are to be carefully titrated for tactical advantage.

Unlike Galula's France, the United States in the 21st century is not a colonial power, and our counterinsurgencies during the past 40 years have been well intentioned and prosecuted with a clear political aim—what Sir Robert Thompson calls "To establish and maintain a free, independent and united country which is politically and economically stable and viable."[18] The United States possesses one of the most powerful political slogans ever devised: "the legitimacy of a government derives from the consent of the governed." On a less exalted level, we are the leading exporter of modern mass consumer culture, the "Universal Solvent"—the magical fluid ancient alchemists sought that made old substances disappear and new ones form. It behooves us to understand how our cause, or causes, are viewed by the people whose hearts and minds Galula tells us we should fight for.

In the Long War we are now facing, we have to consider whether our difficulties stem from the strategic problem that Robert B. Asprey defines in his magisterial *War in the Shadows: The Guerrilla in History*.[18] Asprey theorizes that French counterinsurgency doctrine in the Algerian rebellion "failed from the beginning, because, it ignored Mao's first lesson: 'If the political objectives that one seeks to attain are not the secret and profound aspirations of the masses, all is lost from the beginning.'"

As described by Galula and Thompson and tailored to fit each situation, classical counterinsurgency can be a sound guide to successful counterinsurgency if we are confronting a population whose "secret and profound aspirations" are to live in a state where "the legitimacy of the government derives from the consent of the governed." The unanswered question, however, is, Do we need a guide for doing so if the population's "secret and profound aspirations" are to live in the 7th century? *MR*

NOTES

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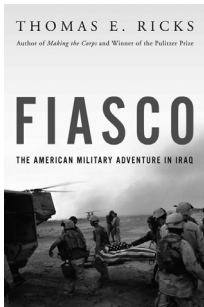
Fiasco: The American Military Adventure in Iraq, Thomas E. Ricks, Penguin Press, New York, 2006, 496 pages, $27.95.

Thomas E. Ricks, the prominent *Washington Post* military affairs reporter, has contributed his own assessment of the evolving U.S. entanglement in Iraq in his new book, *Fiasco: The American Military Adventure in Iraq*. This work follows just several months after Michael R. Gordon and retired General Bernard E. Trainor released *Cobra II*: *The Inside Story of the Invasion and Occupation of Iraq* (Pantheon, Westminster, MD, 2006), and will undoubtedly elicit strong reactions from those in uniform. Ricks broadens the aperture of debate, sharply needling the Bush administration and senior military leaders for their slapdash approach to the postwar effort. He is especially caustic about U.S. leaders' failure to understand that we had wandered into the pernicious thicket of an insurgency; about our misdirected and sluggish response once we did recognize that we were facing an insurgency; and about the abysmal conditions that led to the Abu Ghraib scandal.

While Ricks conducts a trenchant post-mortem of the convoluted lead-up and embarkation to war, *Fiasc*o primarily focuses on the time between the occupation of Baghdad in April 2003 and the second battle for Fallujah in late 2004. There are no unprecedented revelations here. Ricks does not reveal the hideaway locations for weapons of mass destruction, nor does he uncover evidence to substantiate pre-war claims about clandestine Baathist-Al Qaeda linkages. Instead, what he brings is a numbing degree of clarity, both anecdotal and evidentiary, to support three essential claims.

The first claim involves the argument for going to war. Ricks contends that it would have been insufficient to muster support had it not been made in the shadow of 9/11. With sad repetitiveness, he demonstrates how Congress seemed to sleep through the administration's drumbeat, unwilling to challenge even the wobbliest assertions that had been flagged within the intelligence community. He also indicts the media for its own docility at the time, singling out Judith Miller for her series in *The New York Times* that seemed to validate the administration's claims about weapons of mass destruction (WMD). Unfortunately, *Fiasco* went to press just a bit too soon to take note of a late July 2006 poll revealing that more than 60 percent of the American public *still* believe that Iraq had a WMD program. This, despite scores of post-invasion investigative reports that have consistently asserted the opposite—that there is scant evidence of anything resembling the notion that Saddam aspired to reinvigorating such efforts. It makes one wonder where the American public gets its news.

Ricks's second focus for critique is the lack of post-war planning. One senses the reporter's increasingly visceral response to what sometimes seems like a deliberate avoidance of preparation for the aftermath. He cites an Army War College convocation led by historian Conrad Crane in December 2002 that presciently warned: "The possibility of the United States winning the war and losing the peace is real and serious… Thinking about the war now and the occupation later is not an acceptable solution." Ricks condemns the planning done by Joint Task Force IV, under the direction of then-Brigadier General Steve Hawkins, citing one officer's assessment of JTF IV as "fifty-five yahoos with shareware who were clueless."

But even here, Ricks is not so much turning over new rocks as reinforcing what has already reified into conventional wisdom. After all, in the days immediately following the fall of Baghdad, the whole world watched spellbound as Iraqi citizens ransacked their own edifices of culture while American soldiers stood by, seemingly mystified by the erupting chaos around them.

Ricks is most ruthlessly effective when he disrobes the emperor by dissecting the administration's unwaveringly sunshiny outlook. Insistent denials that events had conspired against the U.S., after a series of convoluted attempts to define exactly who or what the American forces in Iraq were experiencing increased attacks from, further eroded the credibility that was so desperately needed to restore public confidence, both American and Iraqi. Ricks relentlessly exposes the failure of U.S. politicians and senior military leaders to understand the nature of the war they were facing, from the explosion of violence in Fallujah against Marines, to the concatenation of improvised explosive device attacks on the roads, to the growing turbulence of militias like those commanded by Moqtada al-Sadr.

Eventually, U.S. leaders would realize that they were in a full-blown

counterinsurgency, but the application of technique to counter the threat was unevenly applied in the absence of a coherent, Iraq-wide strategy. Ricks especially zeroes in on what he contends was the wrong approach, as exhibited by the heavy-handed kinetic operations waged by the 4th Infantry Division under then-Major General Ray Odierno. (Ricks is, however, somewhat ambivalent about the division, since he is obviously respectful of the battlefield leadership exhibited by Lieutenant Colonel Nate Sassman, the 1-8 Infantry battalion commander whose career foundered following an investigation. Ricks also expresses cautiously positive regard for Lieutenant Colonel Steve Russell, whose battalion achieved an arguable degree of traction in the face of mounting hostility.)

The third particular object of Rick's ire is those who were responsible for the infamous Abu Ghraib scandal. According to the writer, any combat successes the coalition enjoyed till then paled beside the damage done by a couple of lowly soldiers armed with digital cameras on a night shift in a prison that had achieved notoriety under Saddam. For the most part, Ricks seems to side with the prison's former commander, Brigadier General (now colonel) Janis Karpinski, who claims that her repeated warnings about the understaffed, overstuffed prison were ignored by intransigent senior commanders. The author is clearly angry about the "buck stopped there" mentality exhibited by Karpinski's military and political superiors, who exonerated themselves by punishing her and her errant Soldiers.

The aggregate effect of Ricks's three-pronged anatomy of the American effort is a debilitating pessimism. Ricks offers little opportunity for hope, and his epilogue paints a correspondingly bleak series of vignettes as he projects possible outcomes to the U.S. "adventure" in Iraq.

There are a few bright spots here and there. For example, Ricks holds up Colonel H.R. McMasters' masterful pacification of the 3d Armored Cavalry Regiment's sector as one example of how counterinsurgency operations can be successfully prosecuted.

But Ricks more or less ignores the genuine successes of the coalition occupation: the two major elections constituted the emergence of fledgling democracy in Iraq. In large part, this oversight is a result of the writer's concentration on the second half of 2003 and most of 2004, prior to the conduct of the elections. Predictably, such oversight will expose Ricks's broader outline of the evolution of a quagmire to serious criticism itself. Ricks is biased, critics will say, and simply doesn't want to lend credit even where it is due. A military that has already assumed the defensive in terms of its reputation, its battlefield skill, and its strategic efficacy will turn a deaf ear to such perceived lambasting.

The timing of publication also did not allow Ricks the chance to acknowledge the cathartic killing of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, no bit player in the unending mayhem across the country, who televised beheadings of his captured victims.

Unfortunately, however, two other series of events now unfolding would seem to reinforce the

validity of Ricks's pessimism. In his epilogue, he declares that Iraq could collapse into civil war. That forecast gathered considerable steam in July, when Generals John Abizaid and George W. Casey both acknowledged that dramatic steps were needed to quell an explosion of sectarian violence in Baghdad. To add to the woe, as the book went to press, it became clear that the long-anticipated troop reduction would not occur; in fact, there would be yet another increase, with the 172d Stryker Brigade being extended to add boots to the effort to subdue Baghdad. And finally, events in Israel and Lebanon seemed to lend some credence to Ricks's assertion that the Iraq war could precipitate wider regional turmoil. Of course, every book must find its ending and draw a line in the sand. But this hairpin turn in regional instability will almost certainly have dramatic consequences for the future of Iraq.

In *Fiasco*, Ricks brings substantial authority, overwhelming corroboration of his claims, and cumulatively distressing conviction to what he clearly sees as a tragic misadventure. If it hasn't already, time will perhaps add to the injuries he has chronicled. But as all of us who have been to Iraq have realized with bittersweet clarity, when it comes to what will ultimately become of the Land between the Two Rivers, only time will tell.

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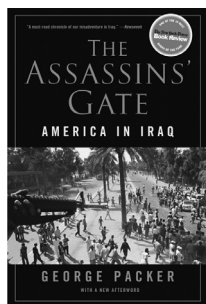
THE ASSASSINS' GATE: America in Iraq, George Packer, Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2005, 467 pages, $26.00

The nominating committee for the inaugural Michael Kelly Award (a $25,000 award given in memory of Michael Kelly, the first American reporter killed while on assignment in Iraq) predicted that 20 years down the line, scholars searching for a definitive account of the troubled aftermath of the U.S. invasion of Iraq would no doubt turn to George Packer. That

was in 2004, and the nomination was for Packer's "War After the War," which appeared in the 24 November 2003 issue of *The New Yorker* magazine. Packer, however, was only a runner-up for the Kelly prize.

Today *The Assassins' Gate*, Packer's super chronicle of the continuing bureaucratic and military struggle in Iraq—which includes much of his reporting for the *New Yorker* but goes far, far beyond that—is already being cited as the most comprehensive if not "the" definitive examination of what turned into chaos for both victor and vanquished following the fall of Saddam Hussein.

Journalism being instant history, Parker does a mind-boggling job at what he does best: on-the-spot reportage, trenchant interviews assembled from all ranks of military and civilian society, compellingly drawn personalities, a look at the complicated psychology of Iraqis themselves (a surface never scratched in invasion planning), valuable background information and some lifting of rocks to shine daylight on the murky history of neo-cons.

Yet in the final analysis, the author leaves a major gap for future historians to fill. The unanswered questions persist: Why did the self-serving

Featured Review

word of certain exiles weigh so heavily with the U.S. administration?

Why a rush to judgment that excluded, for example, opinions such as those of Army Chief of Staff General Eric K. Shinseki? Were weapons of mass destruction a red herring from the very start? Why was such a far-reaching foreign policy initiative undertaken with planning that excluded all unwelcome opinion? Why did the administration not admit to initial mistakes, and recalibrate?

The Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance (ORHA), created in early 2003 by President George W. Bush, may have been relegated early to the dustbin of history (its conclusions were not even sent to Washington), but its unheeded analysis offered an eerie look into the future: "History will judge the war against Iraq not by the brilliance of its military execution, but by the effectiveness of the post-hostilities activities."

Shinseki's testimony on the military requirements he perceived necessary to secure Iraq and rebuild the country was mocked by his civilian boss, the deputy defense secretary and ranking neo-con, Paul D. Wolfowitz. Packer writes that "it was Wolfowitz who ended the one serious public discussion of the fundamentals of the war plan before it had even begun . . . . His message to Shinseki was a message to everyone in and out of uniform at the Pentagon: The cost of dissent was humiliation and professional suicide."

Poignantly, Packer points out that "Wolfowitz, like nearly every other architect of the Iraq war, avoided military service in Vietnam, in his case through student deferments." Vice President Dick Cheney, who received five deferments, later explained: "I had other priorities in the '60s than military service." John Bolton, who like Bush joined the National Guard, was more straightforward: "I confess I had no desire to die in a Southeast Asian rice paddy." (It should be noted that the dust jacket of this book and several published biographies do not list any military service for the author. He did, however, serve in the Peace Corps.)

Indeed, Iraq's odyssey in the 21st century has been compared to that of Vietnam of the 20th century (in public statements at least, it has become an oft-repeated military article of faith that there is no comparison). Iraq also has been held up for analysis against Malaysia, Algeria, the Central American wars and even the fall of France in 1940.

One reviewer wrote that he read *The Assassins' Gate* with pen in hand and watched forests of exclamation points grow in the margins. As a confirmed book lover, I would suggest that you eschew such notation within the pages of the book, and instead keep a yellow legal pad handy to record every name along with its identity. Packer fills his narrative with the jetsam of failed programs who received their 15 seconds of fame, or infame as the case may be. Like the proverbial sporting event, you can't tell the players without a program.

Thomas E. White? He was secretary of the Army, but not for long; now, he's just another sacked footnote. Mohamed Makiya. Kanan's father. Who?

This book has no tidy ending, as befits a war careening from quick victory toward unmanageability. The book itself also seems to unravel after the sharply focused early stages, dissolving into on-the-other-hands and maybes.

Packer readily admits to once being a liberal hawk on Iraq in the neo-con mold. He digs to find gems of hope amid a sea of gloom. In mid-book he writes that "in the absence of guidance . . . commanders in the provinces, such as the 101st Airborne's Major General David Petraeus in Mosul, moved ahead with forming councils, finding business partners for reconstruction, training security forces, even setting local economic and border policy." Meanwhile, however, Bernard Kerik (another name to write on your yellow pad), the colorful New York cop sent by Bush to rebuild security forces, "spent his time in Baghdad going on raids with South African mercenaries. . . . He went home after three months."

Optimism heavily overlaid with caution reappeared in Packer's "The Lesson of Tal Afar," in the 10 April 2006 issue of *The New Yorker* soon after *The Assassins' Gate* was published. Revisiting Iraq, he assessed yet another "success" sound bite from Washington: "The effort came after numerous failures, and very late in the war—perhaps too late. And the operation succeeded despite

an absence of guidance from senior civilian and military leaders in Washington. The Soldiers who worked to secure Tal Afar were, in a sense, rebels against an incoherent strategy that has brought the American project in Iraq to the brink of defeat."

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THE WAR TAPES: The First War Movie Filmed by Soldiers Themselves, (DVD), Stewart Films, 2006.

Rather than sending a film crew to Iraq to create another documentary on the war, director Deborah Scranton just sent cameras. She equipped three New Hampshire National Guardsmen with digital cameras and gave them a bit of training in their use. The resulting film, *The War Tapes*, creates an image of the war that is simultaneously intimate, sweeping, troubling, and inspiring.

For those few of us who have yet to deploy to Iraq, the film's unmediated view of the war is a refreshing change from coverage all too often so far removed from the Soldiers' view that it seems like, well, news coverage. The three main characters in the film—Sergeant Zach Bazzi, Specialist Michael Moriarti, and Sergeant Steve Pink—are caught on camera in moments of fatigue, fear, laughter, and cynicism, expressing their views with a candor few could capture through conventional documentary techniques.

Scranton edited over 900 hours of footage in Iraq and over 200 hours of footage back home—some of it filmed in the Soldiers' absence and some capturing their return and reintegration—into a 94-minute film that won the Tribeca Film Festival's Best International Documentary competition.

The War Tapes is a testament to the American Soldier who, despite danger, disappointment, and political discontent, does his job well and remains surprisingly sensitive under the layer of bravado he dons at times.

The film's main characters are an interesting batch: Moriarti, a patriot so upset by 9/11 that he cannot wait to get to Iraq; Pink, a quietly funny man with a penchant for vivid metaphors, who regrets enlisting

even before the unit deploys; and Bazzi, a Lebanese-American fluent in Arabic, who reads *The Nation* and was apparently one of just several in the company who did not vote for the president in the elections that occurred during their deployment.

We follow the men and their comrades through train-up, their arrival at Camp Anaconda, and their many missions escorting convoys through the Sunni heartland. The film captures their "mad minute" response to an improvised explosive device attack early in their deployment. It captures their fear after a mortar strike near their tents. It captures their moments of toughness—callused responses to the deaths of insurgents in Fallujah. It also captures their rash statements about the value of their lives versus those of Iraqi civilians—but balances these with the outrage the Soldiers express at a policy forbidding treatment of wounded Iraqis on their base and the anguish that grips the Soldiers after their vehicle hits an Iraqi pedestrian. Their grief is clearly deeper and more genuine than even their most convincing tough-guy routines.

The film's predominantly amateurish camera work immerses us in the action as no professional following the squad with a Steadicam could. During intense engagements the camera, completely forgotten but still filming, pans and tilts wildly, so wildly that the only semblance of a coherent narrative the viewer receives is aural: the shouts of confused men and the bark of weapons close at hand. Somehow the genuineness of this footage achieves the gut-wrenching immediacy that the most meticulous action-film editing strives for but falls somewhat short of.

Upon the Soldiers' return, we see them struggle to resume their former lives, not knowing how to speak to friends and loved ones about the war, not knowing how much treatment they should seek, and making decisions about their futures. Most interestingly, Bazzi—the Soldier most strongly opposed to the administration's policies—becomes a citizen shortly after redeployment, and is the only one to reenlist.

Unlike some documentaries, this one takes no sides. It uses scenes of laughter, heartbreak, discouragement, and danger only to show us the war as it is for those we ask to fight it, reminding us of their

foibles, but, in the end, highlighting their strengths as they negotiate the murky terrain of nation-building and counterinsurgency.

Major William Rice, Fort Bragg, North Carolina

THE AXIS OF EVIL: Hezbollah and the Palestinian Terror, Shaul Shay, Transaction Publishers, Brunswick, NJ, 2004, 262 pages, $44.95.

Shaul Shay is a research fellow at the International Policy Institute for Counter Terrorism at the Interdisciplinary Centre and head of the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) department of history. His previous books include *Terror at the Command of the Imam*, *The Endless Jihad*, and *The Shahids*. Shay's ostensible subjectivity towards Iranian-sponsored terror in the Levant notwithstanding, this book is of value to military readers for two reasons: it explains the genesis and evolution of Hezbollah from the 1979 Iranian revolution and the rise of Ayatollah Khomeini, and it explains how Hezbollah adapted its techniques—particularly with innovations in suicide bombings—to improve its effectiveness in striking Israeli and other targets in the Levant and around the globe. Any elucidation of Hezbollah is salient because, after 1996, the organization's bomb experts established a degree of cooperation with Al-Qaeda. This book is germane for one other compelling reason: insurgents in Iraq have been emulating and adopting tactics and techniques that the terrorists of Hezbollah perfected in Lebanon and elsewhere in the latter part of the 20th century.

Shay explores the religious underpinnings of the Iranian Revolution and the export of that revolution through the radical Shi'ite fundamentalist sponsorship of terrorist organizations in Lebanon and elsewhere. He describes the Shi'ite terror networks that operated and continue to operate around the world, and explains Hezbollah's modus operandi. The book contains a chronology of Iranian-sponsored terrorist attacks carried out in the 1980s and 1990s (sorted by type), a catalogue of Iranian-sponsored terrorist groups and their attacks against the IDF and other Israeli targets, and a comprehensive account of Iranian-sponsored attacks against a host of Western and Middle Eastern citizens.

Shay provides insight into Iranian-funded Shi'ite terrorist activity in the post-Khomeini era. More salient to this readership, Shay explains Iranian support of terrorist operations in the post-9/11 period in the context of the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT), particularly the employment of Shi'ite terrorists in Iraq since the beginning of Operation Iraqi Freedom. He also explores Iranian foreign policy objectives in view of the GWOT and, more significantly, in consideration of the reality that U.S. forces and their partners occupy two countries that straddle Iran's western and eastern borders. Finally, Shay discusses the current U.S. policy toward Iran and Syria and the implications that stem from that policy.

This book has some shortcomings. For example, Shay inclines towards descriptive lists and chronologies that can at times be cumbersome. Overall, however, this work merits reading because it provides lucid insights into Hezbollah and other Iranian-sponsored terrorist groups, some of which also may have subsequently influenced Al-Qaeda and its associated terrorist organizations.

LTC Robert M. Cassidy, USA, Kuwait

THE CHINESE ARMY TODAY: Tradition and Transformation for the 21st Century, Dennis J. Blasko, Routledge, London and New York, 2006, 228 pages, $34.95.

In *The Chinese Army Today*, Dennis Blasko set out to write the kind of book he wished he'd had available when he was assigned as a military attaché to China. The book's purpose is to provide a concise but thorough picture of Chinese ground forces as they face the challenges of the 21st century.

By way of orientation, Blasko provides a short history of the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) from its origins as a guerrilla organization fighting for social transformation to its incarnation as a conventional army in the late 20th century. But his focus is on the current transformation of the PLA as it prepares to meet the challenges that are sure to emerge as the People's Republic flexes its economic and political muscle in Asia.

The current push for transformation in the Chinese military

originated with the desire of Mao's successor, Deng Xiaoping, to bring China into the 20th century with his four modernization programs for agriculture, industry, science and technology, and national defense. Wisely, in light of the low national-security threat to their country in the last two decades of the 20th century, the Chinese communist leadership decided to subordinate military modernization to economic development, a more basic national need.

Taiwan's rapid modernization and economic prowess, and the increasingly defiant statements issued by the leaders of what is perceived by China as a "break-away province," led to a renewed emphasis on the modernization of the Chinese armed forces. This is especially evident in the increased importance of amphibious operations and exercises since the late 1990s.

Modernization of the PLA goes beyond the obvious development and purchase of better arms and equipment. It also includes a thorough revision of doctrine, training, organization, tactics, and leadership. As other armies have realized, a smaller and better led, trained, and equipped force is much more effective than the kind of mass armies created during the industrial age.

Blasko also highlights the PLA's place in Chinese society and its close relationship to the communist party. While the PLA did use egregious military force to crush the student pro-democracy movement in Beijing's Tianamen Square, it is also actively engaged in public works, public health, and civil assistance programs. It is both loved by and "loves the people."

Blasko's book is an authoritative primer on the PLA for national security professionals. His background as an Army intelligence officer and China foreign area officer, and his intimate knowledge of primary sources enable him to provide thoughtful analysis. His book should be on every PACOM officer's "must read" list.

MAJ (P) Prisco R. Hernández, USA, Ph.D., Fort Leavenworth, Kansas

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AFTER FIDEL: The Inside Story of Castro's Regime and Cuba's Next Leader, Brian Latell, Palgrave MacMillan, New York, 2005, 248 pages, $24.95.

As the United States remains engaged in the complexities of Iraq's reconstruction and Iran's drive to acquire nuclear weapons, it cannot neglect adversaries in its own hemisphere. The U.S. is facing illegal immigration that allows terrorists to enter the country, Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez continues his campaign of anti-American rhetoric, and finally there is Fidel Castro, the main subject of Brian Latell's new book, *After Fidel: The Inside Story of Castro's Regime and Cuba's Next Leader*.

Latell, a national intelligence officer for Latin America from 1990 to 1994, takes readers into the minds of Fidel Castro and his brother Raúl, the longest serving defense minister and Fidel's designated successor. The brothers were the illegitimate sons of a Spanish peasant named Angel Castro and grew up in a rough rural area in Brian, Cuba. Fidel's future, in particular, was shaped by his upbringing. Doted on by his sisters and mother and, because he was the first-born son, allotted an allowance by his father until he was 24, Fidel became a spoiled narcissist. In 1945, he entered the University of Havana Law School, not to become a great litigator or judge, but to seek control of the campus's political life.

Studying Fidel's university years helps the reader understand how the future dictator organized groups into mafias that agitated and protested the government. It also looks into the books that influenced the Cuban dictator. Fidel was obsessed with the poetry and essays of Jose Marti, who wrote primarily about Cuba's war for independence from Spain. Marti also saw a need to check the United States from eroding the unity of the Spanish-speaking Americas.

Fidel's 21st year was an eventful one. He took charge of university groups agitating for the liberation of Puerto Rico. Also, he and several other Cuban students traveled to Bogota, Columbia, to disrupt the pan-American conference that was about to establish the Organization of American States. Amid the urban violence in Bogota, Fidel emerged as a revolutionary. He read communist tracts not for the historical ideas of Karl Marx, but for the revolutionary tactics of Lenin.

In 1953, Fidel and Raúl grew closer as they planned and executed a failed raid on a fort at Moncada. This is the first glimpse we get of Raúl as

a realist and Fidel as a dreamer. After imprisonment for the failed raid, the brothers fled to Mexico, where Raúl introduced his brother to communist movements in the country and where they recruited Ché Guevara. Although Raúl became a committed communist in Mexico, Fidel did not fully convert until after he had seized power in Cuba in 1959. To the older brother, communism was a means to garner the power needed to topple the ruling regime in Cuba; later, it became an important source of ideological and actual support.

Latell discusses Fidel's many attempts to use his troops and insurgents as active warriors against the United States. We also get a picture of the global rejectionist conference that Fidel sponsored in 1979, which included such nefarious characters as Saddam Hussein, Palestinian militants, and the late Syrian strongman Hafiz al-Asad.

When Fidel finally passes from the scene, Raúl, supported by his generals, will ascend to the leadership. Ever the realist, Raúl wants to engage the Pentagon in discussions about immigration, counternarcotics, and security along the Florida strait even though U.S. policy limits talks between Cuban and U.S. military officials to fence-line discussions at Guantanamo Bay. Raúl has already made a policy decision to return Al-Qaeda detainees to Guantanamo if they escape the detention center, and he has embraced counterterrorism—something his brother has yet to come to terms with.

But Raúl is in his 70's, and there is no succession plan should he die before his brother. This is important to the United States because a widespread breakdown of law and order in Cuba could result in a massive seaborne exodus of Cubans to Florida. U.S. policymakers should pay attention to this book for two reasons—the prospect of a more practical, less dogmatic leader coming to power in Cuba, and the potential for a huge wave of illegal immigration.

LCDR Youssef Aboul-Enein, USN, Gaithersburg, Maryland

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES OF THE OPERATIONAL ART, Michael D. Krause and R. Cody Phillips, Center of Military History Washington, DC, 2005, 487 pages, price unavailable.

Historical Perspectives of the Operational Art is a unique collection of essays by a distinguished group of professional officers and military historians. Bruce Menning's opening essay discusses the origins of operational art by addressing the changing nature of the military art, by looking at the professional vocabulary, and by reviewing the development of operational art in U.S. doctrine. The balance of the book is divided into four parts, each tracing developments in the operational art of a particular country during a particular period: Napoleonic France from the Jena campaign to the beginning of World War II; Germany from Field Marshal Helmuth von Moltke's rise to blitzkrieg operations in World War II; Russia from Imperial Russian Army practices in 1878 to the end of the cold war; and the United States from the Gettysburg campaign to Operation Desert Storm.

The well-researched essays in this book provide a succinct history of the origins and development of operational art in theory and practice. Editors Michael D. Krause and R. Cody Phillips review the problems associated with devising a terminology to distinguish operational art from tactics and strategy and place various national practices in historical context. In their view, each nation developed either theory or practice based on historical experience, the impact of technological change, or the prevailing intellectual atmosphere. The French, for example, concentrated on the practical rather than the theoretical aspects of operational art. They took specific lessons from the Franco-Prussian War and used them to determine their practice at the start of World War I; similarly, lessons learned from World War I influenced French practice at the start of World War II. Krause traces Moltke's influence on German operational art to the Franco-Prussian War. German Army Brigadier General Guenther R. Roth discusses General Alfred Graf von Schlieffen's influence and the dangers inherent in a dogmatic approach. Roth also looks at Field Marshal Erich von Manstein's contributions to theory and practice as evidenced in the Sickle Cut Operation (France, May 1940) and the Rochade Operation (the counterstroke on the Donetz, February-March 1943).

The individual essayists discuss a variety of important doctrinal issues such as the importance of simultaneity and sequencing in campaign planning, the commitment of the operational reserve, how operational miscalculations can be overcome by tactical flexibility, Karl von Clausewitz's concept of the culminating point, and the utility of German Auftragtaktik. In reviewing Germany's operational innovations during World War II, Roth shows how operational deception helped fix the Allied focus on the North German border, thereby enabling the spectacular surprise airborne assault on the Belgian fortress of Eben-Emael. In a lengthy article on operational logistics, Graham H. Turbiville explains the Soviet approach to the integration of operational planning and logistics from 1939-1990, a topic not often given the attention it deserves. Other articles analyze problems with intelligence support to operational planning (Gettysburg), with integrating an important tactical operation into a larger campaign plan (Normandy), and with command and control (the separation of X Corps from Eighth Army command after the Inchon landing).

Several aspects of this book intrigued me. The research and historical analyses are outstanding, and I found it interesting to trace the different national approaches to operational theory and practice. I noted that it took a certain kind of intellectual environment to set the incubating conditions for doctrinal development, but at the same time, no matter how intellectually rigorous the ensuing development was, the doctrine could fail in practice, where it counted—as the Soviets learned in Afghanistan. Any book that stimulates a reader to think has value. Krause and Cody have provided a fine work for both the theorist and the practitioner.

LTC Christopher E. Bailey, U.S. Army, Charlottesville, Virginia

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FANATICISM AND CONFLICT IN THE MODERN AGE, Matthew Hughes and Gaynor Johnson, eds., Frank Cass, Abington, Oxon, United Kingdom, 2005, 171 pages, $135.00.

Fanaticism and Conflict in the Modern Age offers revealing insights into the frequently misinterpreted realities of fanaticism. Drawing on the usual historical and contemporary examples, but including less obvious ones like the Sudanese Dervishes of the 1890s and the loyalist Orange Order parades of Northern Ireland, the authors assembled here skillfully bring to light the complex nature of this recurring phenomenon.

Adroitly researched, the book highlights the philosophical underpinnings of fanaticism and probes the ideological links between politics and religion. It illuminates the many expressions of fanaticism in the modern era. In "Religious and Nationalist Fanaticism: the Case of Hamas," Meir Litvak explores the Palestinian Islamic Resistance Movement and concludes that fanatical movements need not be devoid of rational thinking; they can, on occasion, give precedence to tactical needs or recognize constraints in order to serve strategic goals. Barrie Paskins makes one of the more profound claims about fanaticism in "Fanaticism in the Modern Era" when he declares that "the concept [of fanaticism] is complex and shrouded in prejudice and stereotype." This perceptive observation points to one of the book's central themes: where you stand—your own environment, your cultural values, the standards you adhere to—determines how you will perceive a particular act. For the military planner, this has important connotations. Instead of merely demonizing a rival whose actions fall outside the bounds of Western norms, military professionals should endeavor to understand and rationalize the motives behind those actions. If this is done, the fanatic becomes less primeval; we can figure out his motivations and use them to make him susceptible to influence. The case studies presented in this book prove that fanatics, while fanatical, are far from irrational. Understanding their motivation is essential if we are to succeed in the Global War on Terror.

MAJ Andrew M. Roe, British Army, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas